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20 MAR 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR : Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : ORCART Program Status

1. Since the first flight of an ORCART A-12 aircraft, 26 April 1962, 160 flights, totaling 203.27 flight hours, have been made with five aircraft at [redacted]. Fifteen flights totaling fifteen hours occurred with an aircraft equipped with one J-75 and one J-58 engine and eleven flights totaling nine hours with aircraft configured with two J-58 engines. Henceforth, all but two aircraft (trainer and a test aircraft) will be equipped with J-58 engines. Eventually all aircraft will be retrofitted with J-58 engines.

2. Five A-12 aircraft now are in flight test. On 20 March, a sixth aircraft was delivered to [redacted]. Attachment /1 contains a delivery schedule for the remaining nine A-12 aircraft of the fifteen under procurement.

3. Until recently the most serious roadblock on the program was the critical shortage of J-58 engines. Presently seventeen of the fifty-seven engines under procurement have been delivered. Production and testing of the highly complex engine fuel controls are the pacing factors.

4. The aircraft, engines and other critical components, including the inertial navigation system, stability augmentation system, autopilot, air induction system, pilot equipment equipment, [redacted]

[redacted], all specifically developed for the program, have performed reasonably well within the limits of testing so far in the flight test program. The usual routine problems have been encountered and system debugging and optimization of equipments is underway.

[redacted]
in current AIR Defense studies and [redacted] are being given

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high priority attention. This aspect of the program will require constant effort both on the part of the analysts and those developing the vehicle and the operational procedures for its use.

6. In the next few months maximum effort will be directed to reaching intended speed and altitude in the flight test program so that the aircraft, related systems, equipment and sensors can be checked under the high temperature and high altitude environment. The top speed and altitude thus far attained in flight test has been Mach 2.49 and 70,000 feet. Meanwhile, four of eventual ten operational pilots assigned to the A-12 are undergoing training. Plans for aerial refueling tanks are being studied and other technical and operational preparations are underway.

Original signed by
S. C. Ladd

MICHAEL COVILLA, Jr.
Deputy Director
(Research)

cc: SMC

Attachment:

1 - Aircraft Delivery Schedule

Signature Recommended:

S. C. Ladd

JACK C. LEEDFORD
Colonel, USAF
Assistant Director, OSA

C/DO/OSA/JP:rel
(20 March 1963)

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[redacted] 25-43

Attachment # 1

A-12 AIRCRAFT DELIVERY STATUS

| <u>Aircraft</u> | <u>Delivery To Test Site</u> |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| #121 - #126 | Now at site |
| 127 | 14 May 1963 |
| 128 | 11 June 1963 |
| 129 | 30 July 1963 |
| 130 | 11 September 1963 |
| *131 | 22 October 1963 |
| *132 | 11 November 1963 |
| *133 | 17 December 1963 |
| *134 | January 1964 |
| *135 | February 1964 |

*Air Force aircraft

M-12 (EXTRA 702) DELIVERY STATUS

| <u>Aircraft</u> | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1001 | June 1963 |
| 1002 | August 1963 |
| 1003 | November 1963 |